

for hydrogen vehicles, which have a lot of potential, too.

I just want us to keep in mind, when that day comes—I want the Postal Service to keep in mind that we need for them to set an example—for the Postal Service to set an example. If they go out and two-thirds of the new vehicles they buy are gasoline- and diesel-powered, shame on them, and, frankly, shame on us in this body for allowing that to happen.

But we have to remember that the Postal Service is fighting for its life, and we need to be there and be helpful in terms of helping to pay for the infrastructure that they will need when they buy these new vehicles.

I will close with this. Mr. President, I am not sure where Home Depot is headquartered. Are they not headquartered in Georgia? If they are, nod your head. I think they are. I love to talk about Home Depot.

Whenever I go down to Central America, to places like Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador—we call them the Northern Triangle countries—we have something in place called the Alliance for Prosperity program. It is designed to help fight corruption, their crime, their violence, and their lack of economic opportunity there.

And we provide money—taxpayer money—to help these countries down there, so people will stop feeling like they have to come up here to escape the violence, the corruption, the crime, and the lack of economic opportunity. So we provide some money, and then we expect them, for every dollar we provide, to provide four or five dollars on their own. We want foundations to put up money. We want businesses to put up money to help produce this as well.

I say to the people of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, who live in some really terrible situations, when I talk to them about the Alliance for Prosperity, which has been in place now for several years: You can do it. You, those three countries—Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador—you can do it. We can help, and I think we have a moral obligation to help.

I think at the Postal Service, they can do it. They can update their fleet. They can do so in a way that is sustainable and is actually good for this planet. This is the only planet we are going to have. We have to take care of it or, otherwise, face huge, huge challenges.

So I would, on this Earth Day, say to my colleagues that the anniversary provides opportunity. The Postal Service is going through its share of adversity, as well, but there is real opportunity, as well, to help the Postal Service and the men and women who work there to do a better and a more reliable job of delivering the mail to all of us but, also, to do so in a way that is good for our planet.

That would be a very, very good thing and make this Earth Day especially memorable.

Mr. President, with that, I am going to bid you adieu. Great weekend to you and the staff. God bless you. Thank you so much.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Wisconsin.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 59, Deanne Bennett Criswell, of New York, to be Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security; that the cloture motion be withdrawn, the nomination be confirmed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, as if in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motions presented earlier be considered to have been presented in the following order: Miller, McCabe, and Kahl.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the following statement was ordered to be printed, in the RECORD.)

### COVID-19 HATE CRIMES ACT

• Mr. LEE. Mr. President, over the past 13 months, Americans have endured extraordinary constraints on one

of the most precious rights guaranteed by our Constitution: the right to freely exercise their religion. There is, perhaps, no freedom more intertwined with our nation's history. It was religious freedom that drove persecuted settlers from England to America just over 400 years ago. And they were not the last. Over the centuries, countless religious minorities from across the world have come to America, seeking refuge from religious warfare and bigotry.

To be clear, we haven't always lived up to this ideal. Members of the church to which I belong were forced to flee across the country due to religious persecution, to name just one example. Despite these aberrations, however, no nation in the history of the world has protected and preserved the rights of religion and conscience like the United States. And that's not an accident. The First Congress recognized the profound importance of religious freedom by protecting it in the very first sentence of the Bill of Rights. That provision—called the First Amendment—states that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” The Supreme Court has applied this prohibition to State and local governments through the 14th Amendment.

So what does this mean, practically? First, governments cannot discriminate against religion or single it out for worse treatment than similar non-religious activities. But, second, if a government does treat religion differently than other similar activities, it must “pass” the “strict scrutiny” test. That means that the government must show that there was absolutely no other way to achieve an extremely important goal than restricting the religious activity in question.

The First Amendment is clear. Religious exercise must be protected. Nevertheless, over the course of the pandemic, governments throughout the country have placed heavy-handed restrictions on this fundamental freedom, restricting Americans' freedom to gather for worship, to meet in smaller groups for religious purposes, or even to sing.

At first, Americans accepted these restrictions. We understood the extraordinary difficulties facing our leaders as they struggled to grapple with a new and deadly virus. And we were assured that these restrictions would be temporary, lasting no longer than necessary. But as the weeks and months dragged on and the prohibitions on religious exercise continued, we began to see a startling trend. As restrictions on restaurants, casinos, and museums began to thaw, in many states, synagogues, churches, temples, mosques, and other religious gatherings were left out in the cold.

In May 2020, the Governor of California allowed some restaurants and retail businesses to operate indoors with up to 50 Percent capacity. Meanwhile, all indoor religious services—of